

Building the County Sheep and Wool Program



TEXAS AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION SERVICE
J. E. Hutchison, Director, College Station, Texas

Building the County Sheep

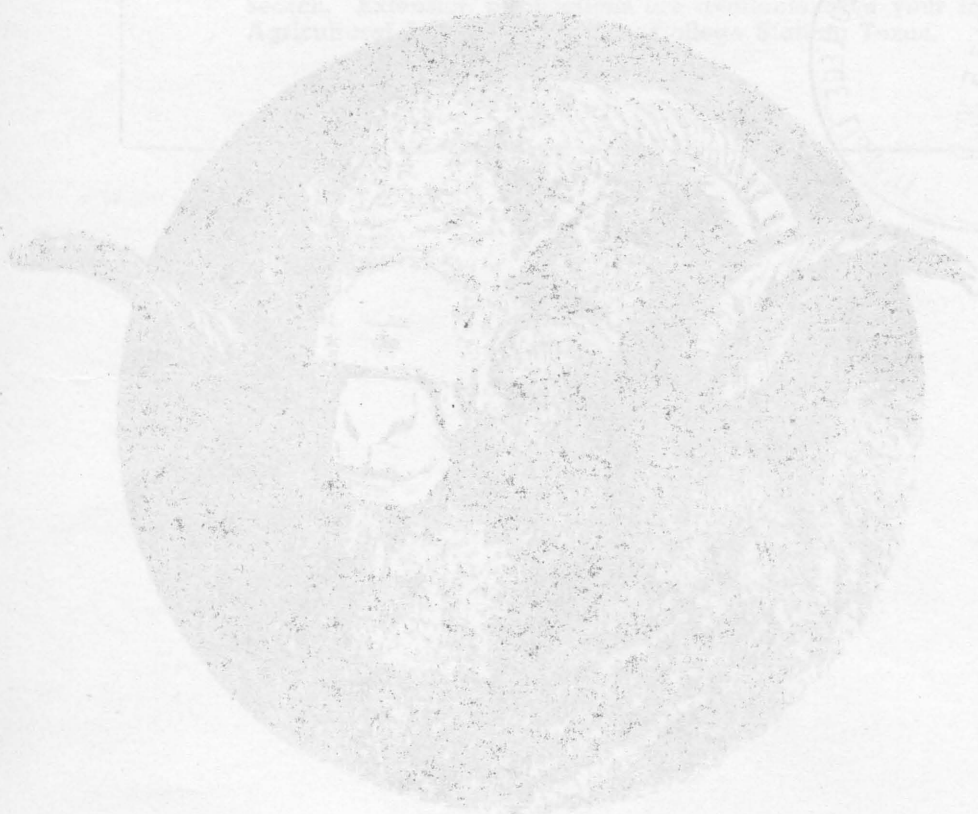
Have you tried...

and Wool Program

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Extension Animal Husbandman

Texas A. & M. College System



TEXAS AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION SERVICE

1. E. HUNTER, Director, College Station, Texas

BUILDING THE COUNTY SHEEP AND WOOL PROGRAM

THE EXTENSION SHEEP AND WOOL PROGRAM should be developed to meet the needs of your county. Producers of sheep and wool are the logical individuals to develop this program. Any program that lacks their support cannot serve a useful purpose.

To develop a county program, you should be familiar with the production and marketing problems of the area. The program building committee members should rank these problems according to importance and develop a program to solve them. Sheep and wool producers should be able to recognize these problems and, with the assistance of the county extension agents, plan solutions.

Problems vary from county to county and from one area to another. The following suggestions may not apply to your county so the committee should develop and suggest possible solutions to the problems which do not appear in this outline.

The following data may prove helpful to the committee in developing a county program by giving a picture of the county situation in relation to the state situation.

	County	State
Sheep and lambs shorn		
5 years ago	_____	_____
Last year	_____	_____
Estimate for the current year	_____	_____
Average fleece weight		
5 years ago	_____	_____
Last year	_____	_____
Estimate for the current year	_____	_____
Average price per pound of wool		
5 years ago	_____	_____
Last year	_____	_____
Estimate for the current year	_____	_____
Total value of wool sales		
5 years ago	_____	_____
Last year	_____	_____
Estimate for the current year	_____	_____
Percent of lamb crop		
5 years ago	_____	_____
Last year	_____	_____
Estimate for the current year	_____	_____

County

State

Average price per pound of lambs sold

5 years ago

Last year

Estimate for the current year

Average weight of lambs sold

5 years ago

Last year

Estimate for the current year

SHEEP PRODUCTION PRACTICES

County Situation

Practice	Recommendation	Good	Fair	Needs Improvement
1. Select a breed that has proved profitable for the county or area.	Consider adaptability and type of production.			
2. Follow a sheep selection program.				
a. Age.	Cull according to the productivity of the sheep.			
b. Size.	The size should be representative of the sheep of the area.			
c. Conformation.	Conformation is necessary to produce a desirable market lamb.			
d. Open face.	Open-faced sheep produce more pounds of lamb.			
e. Length of wool.	Finewool sheep should produce 1/4 inch of wool per month or 3 inches per year.			
f. Fineness of wool.	Fineness of wool should be representative of breed.			
g. Uniformity of fineness.	Discriminate against hairy britch or lack of uniformity.			
h. Completeness of covering.	The body should be well covered with wool except for the face.			

County Situation

Practice	Recommendation	Good	Fair	Needs Improvement
3. Select rams from high-producing flocks.	Use production tested rams when possible.			
4. Practice seasonal breeding.	Follow practices that best fit the county.			
5. Control external parasites.	Spray or dip with recommended insecticides.			
6. Control internal parasites.	Drench as needed; use phenothiazine salt.			
7. Control diseases.				
a. Soremouth.	Vaccinate baby lambs.			
b. Bluetongue.	Vaccinate at 4 to 5 months and as needed.			
c. Enterotoxemia.	Vaccinate as needed.			
8. Control predators.	Employ a government trapper; enact and enforce a county doglaw.			
9. Castrate and dock.	Perform operations from 1 to 3 weeks of age.			
10. Provide protection from weather.	Provide a shed or natural shelter.			
11. Feed mineral supplements.	Feed minerals to meet county needs.			
12. Provide the proper number of rams to ewes.	Provide a minimum of 3 rams per 100 ewes. Large, rough or brushy pastures may need more rams.			
13. Provide adequate watering facilities.	Sheep should not have to travel over 1/2 mile to water.			
14. Distribute salt properly.	Salt away from water for better utilization of pastures.			
15. Stock pastures properly.	Follow the stocking rate recommended for the county.			
16. Provide supplemental feed.	Use home-grown feeds when possible; buy supplemental feeds when they are plentiful.			
17. Increase the percent of lamb crop.	Practice better management at lambing time.			
18. Increase grease fleece weights.	Increase the average grease fleece weight for the county.			

Practice	Recommendation	County Situation		
		Good	Fair	Needs Improvement
19. Use temporary pastures.	Use temporary pastures when possible.			
20. Keep records.	Keep records of the percent of lamb crop, price of lambs and the average weight of lambs sold.			

WOOL PRODUCTION PRACTICES

Practice	Recommendation	County Situation		
		Good	Fair	Needs Improvement
1. Practice tagging or crutching.	Tagging or crutching should be done before lambing and to prevent fleece worms.			
2. Provide a clean place to shear.	Clean the pens and wet them down.			
3. Keep mohair out of wool.	Clean mohair out of shearing pens.			
4. Shear on shearing boards or floor.	Hire a crew that shears on boards and has its own shearing boards.			
5. Use trip boards.	Keep trash and dirt off shearing floor.			
6. Separate black sheep and sheep with black faces.	These sheep should be shorn last and the wool packed separately.			
7. Use new lubricating oil.	Request shearers to use new lubricating oil or supply new lubricating oil for shearers.			
8. Give the shearing crew definite instructions.	Use proper shearing, rolling and packing methods.			
9. Keep the shearing floor clean.	Keep tags picked up, the shearing floor swept clean and pack tags separately.			
10. Roll fleeces properly.	Roll with flesh side out.			
11. Tie fleeces properly.	Use paper twine only and not excessive amounts.			
12. Pack bags uniformly.	Pack bags either flat or round; the average weight should be 180 to 200 pounds.			

County Situation

Practice	Recommendation	Good	Fair	Needs Improvement
13. Keep bags clean.	Lower bags on to tarp or clean floor after packing.			
14. Practice grading.	Practice only when warehouse is cooperating.			
15. Haul in a clean truck.	Clean truck or trailer; cover with a tarp.			
16. Store in a safe place.	Keep clean and dry, preferably where insured.			
17. Keep records.	Keep records of average shearing weights, price, shearing price and bag weights.			

PROJECTS FOR THIS YEAR

After the county situation has been studied, your committee may wish to list the weakest parts of the county program. Some parts will require several years to reach desired goals and some may need continuous attention. List the parts of the program that need the most attention; suggest a goal and a year for their completion.

Project	Suggested Goal	Year for Completion
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		
6.		

Subcommittee Assignments for
Each Major Project

Project No. 1

_____Chairman

Project No. 3

_____Chairman

Project No. 2

_____Chairman

Project No. 4

_____Chairman

Chairman_____
Chairman

Committee members may serve on more than one project committee. Leaders, such as warehousemen, feed dealers and bankers can give valuable assistance to these committees. The county situation may call for subcommittees.

SUGGESTED PROJECTS

Sheep Improvement Through Selection

- I. Survey producers to determine interest.
 - A. Enlist the help of those already interested.
 - B. Enlist the help of wool warehousemen, feed dealers, bankers and breed associations.
- II. Give a sheep selection demonstration to explain the program and encourage participation.
 - A. Use personal contacts, press, radio and television to stimulate interest.
 - B. Enlist the help of other interested parties.
 - C. Discuss these points at the demonstration:
 1. Flexibility of the program.
 2. Points considered in making selections.
 3. Value of keeping records.
 4. Progress that can be expected.
 5. Value of good sires.
 - D. Shear some of the sheep to demonstrate higher fleece weights in better sheep whenever possible.
- III. Plan tours to ranches when programs are underway.
 - A. Tour at lamb delivery time to observe the quality of lambs.
 - B. Tour at shearing time to observe improvements in fleece weights and wool quality.
 - C. Tour the wool warehouse to observe clips from ranches in the program and from ranches not cooperating.
- IV. Prepare exhibits at the local warehouses or banks, using pictures, small samples of wool, shrinkage information and lamb delivery weights.

Preparation of Wool for Market

- I. Survey methods in use.
 - A. Enlist the help of those practicing proper preparation.

- B. Enlist the help of local warehouses and bankers.
 - C. Have committee members visit the warehouses and counties where good preparation methods are employed.
- II. Hold a wool preparation demonstration.
- A. Use personal contacts, press, radio and television to develop interest.
 - B. Enlist the help of local warehouses.
 - C. Encourage local shearers and shearing crews to attend
 - D. Points to discuss at the demonstration are:
 - 1. Equipment to do the job.
 - 2. Ways ranchmen can improve the shearing operation.
 - 3. Ways the shearing crew can improve the shearing operation.
 - 4. Shearing, rolling and tying of fleeces.
 - 5. Packing of bags.
 - 6. Showing of well-packed and poorly packed bags.
- III. Plan a tour to ranches practicing good shearing and wool preparation.
- A. Tour ranches which practice good shearing methods and possess good equipment.
 - B. Tour wool warehouses to observe preparation methods in use, both good and bad.

Grading Wool at Shearing Pens

- I. Obtain the cooperation of wool warehouses before attempting this project.
 - A. Warehousemen must agree to sell wool on its merits and uphold the work of the graders.
 - B. Growers must agree to consign graded wool to the warehouse and ensure the warehouseman a definite tonnage.
- II. Hold a grading demonstration.
 - A. Present market information on the sale of graded wool.
 - B. Present information on grades of wool.
 - C. Present information on grease fleece weights for different grades and lengths of wool.
 - D. Give results of growers selling wool on a graded basis compared to those not grading.
 - E. Grade the clip of wool at shearing pens.

Range Testing of Rams

- I. Study the ram testing work at the Sonora Experiment Station.
- II. Set up a program in the county.
 - A. Obtain at least three body weights of rams at weaning, fall and spring shearings.
 - B. Obtain fleece weights of rams for a known period of growth; use clean fleece weights where practical.
 - C. Obtain staple lengths of rams for a known period of growth.

D. Keep accurate records on the above so that an average daily gain and wool production can be compared.

III. Encourage the use of production tested rams.

REFERENCE MATERIAL ON SHEEP AND WOOL

Texas Agricultural Extension Service

- B-129 - Fattening Lambs
- B-218 - Emergency Feeding of Livestock
- B-237 - Preparing Wool for Market
- B-827 - Farm Sheep Production in Texas
- B-858 - Selecting Sheep for Wool and Mutton Production
- L-322 - Creep Feeding Lambs

U. S. Department of Agriculture

- L-92 - Preparing Wool for Market

Harvest Period Trends in the Composition of Turnip Greens Grown in Texas

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Acknowledgment is due Billy F. Kidd, associate county agent in ranch development, for his assistance in developing this publication.

REFERENCE MATERIAL ON SHEEP AND WOOL

United States Department of Agriculture

- 9-135 - Raising Sheep
- 9-215 - Emergency Feeding of Livestock
- 9-237 - Preparing Wool for Market
- 9-277 - Farm Sheep Production in Texas
- 9-289 - Selecting Sheep for Wool and Meat Production
- 9-302 - Sheep Feeding Tables

U. S. Department of Agriculture

- 9-92 - Preparing Wool for Market

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